IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re PATENT APPLICATION of:

GAGNON — Confirmation No.: Unassigned

Appln. No.: New Non-Provisional Application — Group Art Unit: Unassigned

Filed: September 11, 2003 — Examiner: Unassigned

For: ONBOARD COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM FOR A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE

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September 11, 2003

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Prior to initial examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 1, just below the title, please insert the following paragraph:

This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application 60/409,601, filed September 11, 2002, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace paragraph [0041] with the following paragraph:

[0041] The communications system includes an antenna 115 that receives and transmits signals. The antenna 115 may be positioned at any convenient location on the snowmobile 10, but is preferably disposed at a location [[the]] that maximizes its sending and receiving power. As illustrated, the antenna 115 is mounted onto a front fairing 116 of the snowmobile 10. Alternatively, the antenna 115 may be mounted to the windshield 110, a display 126 of

the communications system 100, the helm assembly 60, a rear fairing 117, a forward or rearward bumper 118, 119, respectively, etc.

Please replace paragraph [0065] with the following paragraph:

[0065] While the communications system 100 has been described as ~~included~~ including a plurality of components (e.g., a GPS system 130, an emergency distress system 136, a snowmobile 10 orientation sensor 134, fuel level/engine speed/battery sensors 146, a weather radio 132, a transceiver 134, an ignition control system, a two-way voice communications system 144, etc.), all of these communications system 100 components are not required to practice the present invention. Rather, a communications system according to the present invention may include just one of the communications system 100 components or any combination of two or more of the communications system 100 components.

Please replace paragraph [0067] with the following paragraph:

[0067] The display 126 is operatively connected to many or all of the communications system 100 components and snowmobile 10 gauge components so that the display 126 can selectively or simultaneously display information from these snowmobile 10 components. Because the most convenient display space (e.g., the available space around the helm assembly 60, windshield 110, handlebars 55, etc.) on recreational vehicles such as the snowmobile 10 is limited, the single display 126 can display a variety of information, thereby eliminating the need for multiple, space-consuming, displays. The display 126 preferably ~~comprising~~ includes a single display cluster that preferably includes a single LCD screen, but may alternatively include a plurality of distinct needle gauges, LCD screens, etc. As illustrated in FIG. 3, the display 126 is circular. However, the display 126 could also be rectangular to more easily accommodate one or more LCD screens. The viewable area of the display 126 is preferably less than 150 cm^2, but may alternatively be larger if space permits.

To the extent that space permits on a vehicle, each communication system 100 component could have its own distinct display without departing from the scope of the present invention.

Please replace paragraph [0070] with the following paragraph:

[0070] As illustrated in FIG. 5, the communications system 100 on the snowmobile 10 may also function as an external communications system 120' for a second communications system 100' on a second snowmobile 10'. Similarly, the communications system 100' on the second snowmobile 10' may function as the external communications system 120 for the communications system 100. Because the snowmobiles 10, 10' are generally identical to each other, only the snowmobile 10 will be described in detail. It is to be understood that the description of the snowmobile 10 is equally applicable to the second snowmobile 10'.

Please replace paragraph [0071] with the following paragraph:

[0071] The communication systems 100, 100' may send each other their respective location data from their GPS systems 130. Accordingly, the communications system 100 can display the relative position of the ~~other~~ second snowmobile 10' on its display 126. The relative positioning display makes it easy for the rider of the snowmobile 10 to find the second snowmobile 10'. The communications system 100 may also receive distress signals from the emergency distress system 136 of the communications system 100' and notify the rider of the snowmobile 10 that the ~~other~~ second snowmobile 10' or its rider are in distress.